MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
OCTOBER 19, 1960

The Commission met pursuant to notice at 9:30 a.m., with David E. Finley, Chairman, presiding.

Present were: David E. Finley
Douglas W. Orr
William G. Perry
Michael Rapuano
Felix W. de Weldon

L. R. Wilson, Secretary
Charles H. Atherton, Asst. Sec'y
C.L. Martin, Counsel

1. Administration

The members of the Commission approved the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Commission held on September 8, 1960 concerning the location of a proposed Federal Court Building on Lafayette Square.

2. Shipstead-Luce Act

S.L. 2237, National Academy of Sciences Building, Addition

The Secretary read a letter which had been forwarded to the Commission by the Chief, Permit Branch of the District of Columbia Department of Licenses and Inspections from the architects of the National Academy of Sciences regarding the planned addition to the Academy building located at 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W. The letter explained that available funds for the addition were such that it was impossible to incorporate all of the features of the building shown in the plans approved by the Commission of Fine Arts on December 15, 1959.

In particular, it was proposed to eliminate the terrace and low wall in front of the new west wing. The department of Licenses and Inspections requested the recommendation of the Commission on this proposal.

The members discussed the matter and decided to reaffirm the position taken at the Special Meeting held on October 5, 1960 in New York City, that it was hoped that funds could be secured to complete the terrace and wall and carry out the original design for the building. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter informing the Department of Licenses and Inspections of the Commission's recommendation. EXHIBIT A

3. General Services Administration
Public Buildings Service

a. Revised Design for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Building, 17th Street and New York Avenue, N.W.

The Commission conferred with representatives of the Public Buildings Service and the architects on revised designs for the proposed Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The Commission examined architects' drawings submitted in which they incorporated the revisions suggested by the Commission at the special meeting held in New York City on October 5, 1960.

A sample of dark granite, a diamond grey color, called Cold Spring Granite from Minnesota was shown to the members. The members liked the color and suggested that the granite be given a hone finish rather than a polished finish. A suggestion was made that another color of the same granite could be used in the upper stories of the building to provide a contrast with the base of the building.

The visual effect of a recommendation at the New York meeting that the vertical rows of windows adjacent to each corner be eliminated was discussed. The architects presented drawings showing the effect of this recommendation and it was agreed that this would improve the appearance of the building. However, the drawings presented showed vertical pilasters at the corners, whereas the members expressed a preference for an unbroken corner. There was some discussion of the treatment of the corners and it was recommended that further study be given to this matter, but that the final determination of the details of the design be left to the descretion of the architects.

The revised design of the top floor was discussed with the architects, who agreed with the Commission's recommendations that the general proportions of the spacing modules shown in their revised drawings be doubled in size all around the building.

The architects also agreed to the Commission's suggestion that the fenestration on the 17th Street side of the building should run all the way across the facade and that the accentuation of the windows of the Boardroom be eliminated. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter to the Administrator of the General Services Administration setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT B

b. Selection of an Artist to Execute a Mural for the Proposed Los Angeles Custom House and Federal Office Building

The Commission met with a representative of the Public Buildings Service, concerning a request for the advice of the Commission in the

selection of an artist to design and execute an interior tile or mosaic mural in the Los Angeles Custom House and Federal Office Building in Los Angeles, California. The members stated that both men were capable muralists and that it was their opinion that it should be left to the architects to choose the artist they preferred to work with.

It was also suggested that a bench shown in the plans for the building as located in front of the wall upon which the mural will be executed, should be moved to another location, so that the artist will be able to utilize the entire wall space from floor to ceiling. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT C

4. American Battle Monuments Commission
Proposed Restoration of the Third Division Monument in Chateau-Thierry, France

The Chairman of the Restoration Committee for the Third Division, Mr. Frederick Winant, and Colonel George Shepherd, architect, met with the Commission to explain the plans of the proposed restoration of the Third Division monument in the town of Chateau-Thierry, France, which the members had examined at their executive session on the preceding day.

Mr. Winant asked the Commission to comment upon the alternate sites for the monument and upon the design shown in the plans and photographs of a model which he had submitted.

The Commission expressed a preference for the proposed new location of the monument in the garden site facing the Marne River at some distance from the original location.

The Commission approved the design shown in Variant 3, dated September, 1960. It was suggested however that the effect of the monument would be greatly enhanced if the entire structure were to be raised approximately two feet above the level of the garden which it faces.

The members were interested to learn that it was believed possible to complete the entire monument with the stone used in the original monument, and they felt that this idea would be a most appropriate way to commemorate the history of the Third Division campaigns in both World Wars. They expressed the hope that the finished monument expressed the design shown in the model. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT D

5. Veterans Administration
Revised Plans for the Veterans Administration Hospital in the District of Columbia

The Commission conferred with representatives of the Veterans

Administration and the architects concerning proposed revisions in the design of the front entrance to the Veterans Administration Hospital, which were suggested by the Commission at the meeting on September 21,1960.

The Commission approved the revised design as presented with the recommendation that the area under the front canopy should be entirely paved, inasmuch as it was believed highly unlikely that grass could grow under the wide roof shown in the drawings.

The Commission also approved the use of a dark and a light grey brick for the building instead of the red and white combination which was shown in the original submission. The treatment of the penthouse as a continuation of the walls below, making the penthouse and the walls below a single element, was favorably commented upon.

The members of the Commission were disappointed that the plans for the building did not include any provision for underground or other parking facilities. This matter was discussed at length with Mr. Lowell G. Schweikart, who explained that no funds could be expended for an alternative design for underground or separate parking facilities without the approval of the Bureau of the Budget; that the Veterans Administration had informally requested the view of the Bureau of the Budget on the matter and had been told that the expenditure of funds for that purpose would be opposed. He said that a rough estimate of the cost of parking facilities was one and a half million dollars. He further stated that the cost of the entire project had been estimated at approximately twenty million dollars.

The Commission suggested to Mr. Schweikart that the Veterans Administration again seek authority from the Bureau of the Budget to prepare an alternative provision for a garage facility in the event an acceptable bid for the construction of the project is received for no more than $18,500,000 in which event the Veterans Administration would be prepared to build the garage facility for the million and a half dollars gained from the lower bid. The Secretary was directed to write to the Administrator of Veterans Affairs setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT E

6. District of Columbia Government
D.C. Department of Buildings and Grounds
a. Benning Branch Public Library

The Commission met with a representative of the District of Columbia Department of Building and Grounds, who explained the design of a proposed branch library on Benning Road near Minnesota Avenue, N.E.

The site plan of the proposed building showed that the structure would occupy approximately 50% of the site. The members concluded that the site was not adequate for the proposed building. They also objected

to the lack of any opportunity for landscaping because of the large amount of pavement surrounding the building and criticized the design of the building because of its factory-like appearance and a lack of any architectural character in the design and material of the building itself.

The members disapproved the design and recommended that the architect begin again with a new design with a view toward providing a building which would be an asset to the community and will not just meet the minimum standards. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT F

b. New Elementary School at 4th and W Streets, N.W.

The proposed three story elementary school at 4th and W Streets, N.W. in the District of Columbia was reviewed. It was noted, on a site plan, to be located approximately 25 feet from the south wing of an existing three story L-shaped school building and almost as close to the west wing. The members objected to the concept of building a new three story elementary school at a time when most other areas of the country were turning to a one story type. The members also seriously questioned the effects of the student density, a total of nearly 1900 school children, which would result from placing another multi-storied building such as this on such a small plot of land directly adjacent to existing school buildings. The design of the building showed the effect of these crowded conditions and was considered to lack the characteristics of good contemporary school design.

The Commission decided it could not approve the design of the project and recommended that a restudy of the requirements for the school be made, and that further designs be prepared and submitted for review. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the recommendations of the Commission. EXHIBIT G

c. Proposed Doctors Residence, D.C. General Hospital

The Commission reviewed plans for a proposed Doctors Residence to be located on the grounds of the District of Columbia General Hospital in Southeast Washington. The plans showed a three-story building, but the members were informed that fourth and fifth stories were contemplated at some future time.

The members objected to the use of brick both as a structural panel and as a screen wall, in adjacent locations, with no differentiation in the treatment of the material. They explained that this somewhat arbitrary detailing, combined with the fenestration indicated in the drawings for the bathroom windows, would tend to contribute to a confusing

scale on the elevation.

The members stated that these problems would be greatly increased by the addition of fourth and fifth floors to the building. For this reason before they could make a proper judgment on the design, they would like to see final studies of the final scheme, incorporating all five stories and showing all facades of the building. They further requested that the architects restudy this part of the project and resubmit their revisions to the Commission for review.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the recommendations of the Commission. EXHIBIT H

After considering the designs for these buildings submitted by the Department of Buildings and Grounds, the members recommended that the Chairman send a letter to the Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia reporting the actions taken by the Commission of Fine Arts and suggesting that the program and methods followed in the preparation of the designs under consideration be re-examined. EXHIBIT I

7. Department of the Army
Heraldic Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General

a. Airman's Medal

The members conferred with representatives of the Heraldic Branch of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Department of the Army, and the sculptor about the revised design of the Airman's Medal for Valor as shown in the drawings submitted on October 14, 1960.

The Commission approved the placement of the lettering, but recommended that refinement should be made in regard to the form and spacing of individual letters. It was further suggested that the border should be run completely around the medal, rather than stopping it at the bottom against the horizontal area on which the relief figure rested.

The design was given final approval, but the Commission expressed a wish to see the plaster model when it was completed. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the recommendations of the Commission. EXHIBIT J

B. Four Chaplain's Medal

The Commission considered a revised design of the obverse and reverse and the certificate of the Four Chaplain's medal, which was submitted on October 17, 1960 by the Heraldic Branch of the Office

of the Quartermaster General. The members felt that the use of an eagle as the central design element was a distinct improvement over the earlier designs submitted. However, they believed that the distortion of the body and wings of the eagle was disturbing, as was the attachment of the ribbon to the eagle's head.

It was suggested that the reverse side of the medal be studied as a flat surface and that radiating lines be eliminated, with the three elements, the Cross, the Tablet and the Book in relief on this surface.

Since the medal is a special one for presentation to the heirs of the four chaplains, a recommendation was made that the middle name should be given instead of the initials as indicated. The members expressed a desire to see the revised designs when they are prepared. A letter was prepared by the Secretary setting forth the Comm ission's recommendations. EXHIBIT K

At 1:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

C.L. Martin

C.L. Martin, Counsel

Approved:

L.R. Wilson

L.R. Wilson
Secretary

Arcade
Corner
penthouse

[illegible] Mr. [illegible], Asst. Director for Design & Constr.; Mr. [illegible], Chief, Architectural and Structural Div.; [illegible] architectural firm of Gangel, Chatelain and Walmsley)

a. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, [illegible] for Office Building

architect drawing omit bench

b. Los Angeles Custom House Mural, selection of artist for

10:00 a.m. 3. AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION: (Colonel William A. Walker, Administrative Officer, ABMC; Mr. Frederick Winant, Chairman, Reconstruction Committee for the Third Division; Mr. George Shepherd, architect)

Third Division Monument, Chateau Thierry, France

10:35 a.m. 4. VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (Mr. Whitney Ashbridge, Asst Administrator for Construction, VA; Mr. L. D. Mork, Director Design Service, VA; Mr. L. E. Norton, Chief, Architectural Division, VA; Mr. Richard F. Eggers, of Eggers & Higgins, architects; Mr. S. Igor Jacusko of Eggers & Higgins)

Revised plans for Veterans Administration Hospital

11:00 a.m. 5. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT, D.C. DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS (Mr. Gerald A. Purcell, Liaison Officer)

a. Benning Branch Public Library

b. New Elementary School, 4th and W Sts., N.W.

c. Doctors Residence, D. C. General Hospital

Eng Comm

[illegible]

7 November 1960

Dear Dr. Bronk:

Thank you for your letter of November 1.

On Friday, we received from the architect, Mr. Wallace Harrison, a drawing showing plans for a grass terrace, that will carry on, in general, the lines of the marble terrace on the west side of the new wing of the National Academy of Sciences building. We are approving the plans on this basis, with the recommendation that the marble terrace be completed at the earliest opportunity.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Dr. Detlev W. Bronk
President
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington 25, D. C.

REF: SL 2340

EXHIBIT A

27 October 1960

Dear Mr. Fleete:

At its meeting on October 19, 1960, the Commission of Fine Arts met with representatives of the Public Buildings Service and the architects to consider revised plans for the building of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which is to be located at 17th Street and New York Avenue, N.W.

The architects presented a set of drawings showing the revised elevations of the proposed building and explained how the design had been changed from the one previously submitted. After studying the drawings, the members of the Commission found the new design generally satisfactory and expressed their thanks to the architects for their success in adopting the changes in the design of the building which had been recommended at a special meeting in New York City on 5 October 1960, the details of which I reported to you in my letter of 7 October 1960.

The members of the Commission felt that the treatment of the lower story had been well handled, especially the elimination of the driveway at the south end. They further suggested that, in regard to the treatment of the loggia on the top floor, the general proportions and the appearance of the building would be improved if the spacing module shown in the revised drawings presented at the meeting were doubled in size all the way around the building. It was also suggested that the windows on 17th Street should run all the way across the facade, eliminating the accentuation of the windows of the Boardroom. The use of a dark granite with honed finish was preferred.

At the meeting in New York, the members of the Commission recommended that the visual effect of the corners would be strengthened by omitting the vertical rows of windows adjacent to each corner. This recommendation was adapted in the revised design presented at the October 19th meeting in the form of vertical pilasters. However, the members expressed a preference for an unbroken corner and recommended that further study be given to the treatment of the corners of the building, but

EXHIBIT B

resolved that the final determination of the details of the design of the corners should be left to the discretion of the architects.

The next meeting of the Commission will be on November 16. We will be glad to see any further plans for the building which you may wish to present at that time.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Franklin Floete
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington 25, D. C.

clm/lrw/b

cc-Mr. J.R. Snyder
Arch. & Struc. Div., PBS

Mr. L.L. Hunter
Asst. Commr. PBS

28 October 1960

Dear Mr. Wallace:

The Commission of Fine Arts at its meeting of October 19, 1960, considered Mr. Howland Snyder's request for the advice of the Commission in the selection of an artist to design and execute an interior tile or mosaic mural in the Los Angeles Custom House and Federal Office Building in Los Angeles, California. The names of Mr. Richard Haines and Prof. Gyorgy Kepes were proposed by the architects of the building.

After studying the photographs of the work of both artists which Mr. Snyder presented, the Commission concluded that both artists appear to be capable muralists, and that the architects should choose the one with whom they would prefer to work.

The members also noted that the proposed plan of the lobby showed a marble bench, located below the wall surface where the mural is to be placed. It was suggested that, if possible, the bench should be relocated so that the artist will have available the full height of the wall for his work.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Karl Wallace
Commissioner
Public Buildings Service
General Services Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

EXHIBIT C

2 November 1960

Dear Mr. Minant:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on October 19, 1960, was glad to meet with you and Colonel William Shepherd to consider the plans of the Third Division and the city of Chateau Thierry, France to replace and relocate the Third Division Monument which was erected at Chateau Thierry after World War I, and severely damaged by enemy fire in World War II.

The members of the Commission noted especially that the plans for the new monument will utilize the stone of the old monument, and that space is being given to commemorate the actions of the Third Division not only in World War I, but also in World War II. After hearing your explanation of the plans, the members agreed that location C, facing the River Marne at some distance from the old location would make a handsome site for the monument. The elevation drawing of the monument, as shown in Variant 3, dated September 1960, and the photographs of the scale model were considered to show appropriate development of the memorial and the setting, and the design was approved in general as presented.

The members of the Commission felt, however, that the effect of the monument would be greatly enhanced if the entire structure were to be raised about two feet above the level of the garden which it faces, and it was recommended that consideration be given to this suggestion. It was also felt that special care should be given to the design of the two fields of lettering on the monument and to the use of incised letters, rather than sandblasted letters. The Commission has never favored the use of enlarged versions of the divisional shoulder patch insignia on military memorials and hopes that, if this design is used it will be greatly reduced in size and combined with the official title of the Division, or its descriptive title.

The members of the Commission wish you and the Third Division success in carrying this memorial to completion, and will be glad to consult with you further, if you desire, on any problems that may arise.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. Frederick Minant
Chairman, Division Memorial Committee
Centreville, Virginia

EXHIBIT D

1 November 1960

Dear Mr. Whittier:

At its meeting on October 18, 1960 the Commission of Fine Arts met with representatives from the Veterans Administration Hospital in the District of Columbia concerning revisions to the design and materials as suggested by the Commission at its meeting on September 18, 1960. These suggestions mainly involved the treatment and landscaping of the main entrance, the color of the materials and the facilities for parking.

After hearing the architect's explanation of the revised design, the members of the Commission felt that the simplified treatment of the landscaping at the main entrance to the hospital showed decided improvement and they approved it, provided that the area under the canopy should be entirely paved inasmuch as it is extremely doubtful that grass could grow in the shade of such a wide roof-projection.

The Commission also approved the color scheme, using a dark and a light grey brick for the building instead of the red and white combination which was previously contemplated. The members also liked the treatment of the penthouse as a continuation of the walls below, thus making them a single element.

The Commission was greatly disappointed however, that no provision for underground or other parking facilities rather than black-topping the area surrounding the building could be contemplated. The members discussed this matter at length with Mr. Lowell G. Schneikart, who explained that no funds could be expended for an alternative design for underground or separate parking facilities, without the approval of the Bureau of the Budget; that the Veterans Administration had informally requested the view of the Bureau of the Budget on the matter and had been informed that expenditure of funds for such facilities would be opposed. Mr. Schneikart said, however, that a rough estimate of the cost of such facilities had been made and would require roughly one and one half million dollars. The cost of the entire project has been estimated at approximately twenty million dollars.

As I have stated to you before, the Commission believes that the entire appearance and atmosphere of the hospital would be vastly improved if automobiles could be parked out of sight in an underground garage

EXHIBIT E

or in a separate parking building, and that every possible effort should be made to secure a facility of either type in order to provide the proper outdoor amenities needed by such an institution. The Commission therefore, suggested to your representative that the Veterans Administration, at least, again seek authority from the Bureau of the Budget to prepare and have ready an alternate provision for such a garage facility, in case an acceptable bid for the construction of the project is received for no more than $18,500,000. The Budget Bureau has in effect already agreed to spend twenty million dollars for the project, and the Veterans Administration would then be prepared to erect the more desirable parking facility for the million and a half dollars gained from the lower bid.

The Commission of Fine Arts will be glad to support the Veterans Administration in any way that it can in efforts to secure authority from the Bureau of the Budget in order to construct a more desirable parking facility in this and in other new veteran's hospitals.

The next meeting of the Commission will be on November 16. If there are further matters to discuss, please advise us so that time can be reserved.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. Sumner G. Whittier
Administrator
Veterans Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

2 November 1960

Dear Mr. Blaser:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts, at a meeting on 18 October, met with Mr. Purcell of your office in regard to the design for a proposed public library to be located on Benning Road near Minnesota Avenue, N.E. The members were glad to see the design in an early stage of development.

After reviewing the plans and elevations presented by Mr. Purcell, the members agreed that the proposed library was not satisfactory architecturally and that, unless the design is improved, they could not recommend approval of this project.

They felt that the site was not adequate for a building of the size proposed; they objected to the lack of opportunity for landscaping caused by the amount of paving surrounding the building; and they were generally critical of the factory-like appearance and the lack of architectural character in the design and materials of the building itself.

They were also of the opinion that not sufficient study had been given to the elevations except the one facing Benning Road. The wall openings in the various elevations were unresolved and disordered, and were of several different sizes and scales. There also was no indication that consideration had been given to the appearance of the future second story, nor to how it will relate to the construction that is currently proposed for completion.

In short the members were disappointed with the design submitted and recommended that a fresh start be made with a view toward providing a building that will not barely meet the minimum standards, but will be an asset to the community as any public building should be.

The next meeting of the Commission will be on November 16 and time will be reserved for you then, if you desire to present a restudy of the design.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley,
Chairman

Mr. James A. Blaser
Director, Department of
Buildings and Grounds
Washington 4, D.C.

CHA/lrw/b

EXHIBIT F

3 November 1960

Dear Mr. Elsner:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting on October 18, met with Mr. Purcell of your office with regard to the design of a new elementary school to be located at 4th and V Streets, N.W. The members were glad to see the design at an early stage of development.

After reviewing the drawings of this project as presented by Mr. Purcell, the members agreed that before they could consider the details of the design, they must question, first of all, the premise that a three storied building for educating elementary school children was an acceptable concept. The factory-like facades of the resulting design confirmed their views and they pointed out that the trend in the design of modern educational buildings is quite to the contrary, as more recent elementary schools are seldom built with more than a single story.

They also seriously questioned the effects of the student density, which would result from placing such a multi-storied structure on a small plot of land directly adjacent to an existing school building, making a combined enrollment of nearly 1900 children.

In addition the members strongly objected to placing a new school only twenty-five feet away from an existing building, resulting in an alley-like space between them. Such a plan, they pointed out, seemed to be leading toward, rather than away from, slum conditions.

For this reason, the members decided they could not recommend approval of the design of this project when some of the basic concepts of the design were, in their opinion, very questionable. They believed such a project would be setting a poor example for other school projects.

The members of the Commission hoped that a restudy of the requirements for the school could be made, and further designs

EXHIBIT G

prepared. The next meeting of the Commission will be held on November 16, and time will be reserved for you then, if you desire.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. James A. Glasser
Director
District of Columbia Department of
Buildings and Grounds
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

2 November 1960

Dear Mr. Blaser:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting on 18 October, met with your representative, Mr. Purcell, to review the design of the proposed Doctors Residence to be located on the grounds of the D. C. General Hospital in Southeast Washington.

After studying the preliminary drawings as presented by Mr. Purcell, the members commented favorably on the siting and the amount of space accorded to this building, which provided an opportunity that is too often missing from public works projects for the development of an adequate landscaping scheme.

They thought the design of the building itself, however, had not been given a treatment consistent with the attention shown its siting, and they felt obliged to withhold their approval but without prejudice of resubmission.

There was particular objection to the use of brick both as a structural panel and as a screen wall, in adjacent locations, with no differentiation in the treatment of the material. They pointed out that this somewhat arbitrary detailing, combined with the fenestration indicated for the bathroom windows, would tend to contribute to a confusing scale on the elevations.

They further believed this problem would be greatly increased by the additional fourth and fifth floors that the program proposes to be built at some time in the future; and before they could make a proper judgment of the design, they asked to see studies of the final scheme, incorporating all five stories and showing all facades of the building.

Mr. Purcell agreed to arrange for the architects to restudy this part of the program, placing emphasis on simplifying the treatment of the elevations, with special care in selecting the colors and details of the design before resubmitting this project for the Commission's review.

EXHIBIT H

The members were glad to see this design in the early stages of development, and hope that a restudy can be made before the next meeting of the Commission on November 16. Time will be reserved for you then, if you desire.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Mr. James A. Blaser
Director
District of Columbia Department
of Buildings and Grounds
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

cc- Engineer Commissioner for
the District of Columbia

cha/lrw/b

3 November 1960

Dear Colonel Clarke:

I enclose copies of letters which I have written, on behalf of the Commission of Fine Arts, to Mr. Blaser, Director of the D. C. Department of Buildings and Grounds, with reference to plans presented at the meeting of the Commission on October 18 for a proposed Public Library on Benning Road near Minnesota Avenue, N.E.; an Elementary School at 4th and W. Streets, N.W.; and a Residence for Doctors, on the grounds of the D. C. General Hospital.

The members of the Commission, after giving careful study to the plans submitted, agreed that they could not approve them. They were greatly concerned at the quality of the work submitted, and felt that they cannot lower their standards for the design of public buildings in the District of Columbia beyond those generally accepted in other localities.

They realize the difficulties with which you are faced as regards both money and availability of land in crowded residential districts. These difficulties, however, exist in other cities, which, in many instances, are meeting their responsibilities by school taxes or bus transportation in the case of schools where sufficient land is not available.

In the cases under consideration at our recent meeting, individual reports, with recommendations for changes, have been made to the Director of the Department of Buildings and Grounds. The members, however, have asked me to point out their concern that the projects achieved nothing more than a mediocre quality of design, a failing that alone would have been sufficient reason to disapprove them. In addition, it appeared that some of the basic premises upon which the programs had been based seemed to exclude the possibility of ever achieving a good design.

The Commission would like to suggest, therefore, that in order to avoid future situations such as this, the programs and methods followed in the preparation of the designs under consideration should be re-examined. They believed that the requirements, such as sites, costs, materials, etc., as defined in the budget sketches and the design manuals, some extracts of

EXHIBIT I

which were circulated at the presentation, might tend to limit the designer in making a good beginning from which a final design could be developed. The selection of architects on a basis of proved excellence in design also would seem to be desirable. This city is particularly deserving of excellence in design of its public buildings; certainly the basic conditions and standards set for our public building program should be no less than is necessary to achieve this end.

The Commission, therefore, strongly urges that these problems be carefully considered and that an effort be made to improve the design of public buildings in Washington, such as schools, libraries, and hospitals.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Colonel F.J.Clarke
Engineer Commissioner for the
District of Columbia
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

cha/lrw/def/b

27 October 1960

Dear General Calloway:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on October 18, 1960, met with Colonel Martz, Lt. Colonel Whiting and Mr. Tom Jones, sculptor, to consider a revised design of the Airman's Medal for Valor as shown in the drawings received on October 14, 1960.

The members of the Commission approved the placement of the lettering but recommended that refinement should be made in regard to the form and spacing of individual letters. A further suggestion was made that the border should be run completely around the medal, rather than stopping it at the bottom against the horizontal area on which the relief figure rests.

With these two suggestions the Commission gave its final approval to the design, but expressed the wish to see the plaster model when it has been completed.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Major General C.G.Calloway
Director of Operations
Office of the Quartermaster General
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

clm/lrw/b

EXHIBIT J

26 October 1960

Dear General Calloway:

I am writing you in regard to the photographs of the revised design of the obverse and reverse and certificate of the Four Chaplains Medal, which were submitted in your letter of October 17, 1960, and were discussed with Colonel Marts, Lt Colonel Whiting and Mr. Thomas Jones by the members of the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on October 18.

In general, the Commission believed that the designs shown in the photographs were a distinct improvement over the earlier designs submitted. They felt, however, that the distortion of the body and wings of the eagle was disturbing, as was the attachment of the ribbon to the eagle's head. They recommended a restudy and correction of these elements. They also were disturbed by the radiating lines on the reverse of the medal and believed that the elimination of these lines might improve the design. The Commission suggested that a study be made showing the reverse side of the eagle as a flat surface, with the three elements, the Cross, the Tablet and the Book, in relief on this surface.

The Commission also suggested that, since the medal is to be a special medal for presentation only to the heirs of the four chaplains, the middle name should be given in full instead of the initial as indicated.

In order not to delay final approval of the design until the November meeting, authority to give the final approval of the Commission was delegated to the sculptor member of the Commission, Mr. Felix W. de Weldon. If a revised design incorporating the above suggestions is forwarded to the staff of the Commission, it will be forwarded to Mr. de Weldon without delay and he will advise the secretary of his views for transmittal to the Heraldic Branch.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Major General C.C.Calloway
Director of Operations
Office of the Quartermaster General
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D.C.

EXHIBIT K